

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

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FM AMEMBASSY MASERU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6265

C O N F I D E N T I A L MASERU 1191

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, PFOR, LT

SUBJECT: KING MOSHOESHOE II RETURNS TO OXFORD; ANTAGONISM WITH
THE PRIME MINISTER CONTINUES

1. KING MOSHOESHOE II HAS LEFT MASERU FOR BRITIAN TO COMPLETE
HIS EXAMINATIONS FOR A DEGREE AT OXFORD UNIVERSITY. IT IS
RELIABLY REPORTED THAT, IMMEDIATELY UPON ACQUIRING HIS DEGREE,
HIS MAJESTY WILL ENROLL AS A LAW DEGREE CANDIDATE AT CAMBRIDGE.
WHETHER THE KING WILL PURSUE HIS LAW STUDIES IN THE SAME
INTERMITTENT FASHION IN WHICH HE HAS PURSUED HIS DEGREE WORK AT
OXFORD REMAINS TO BE SEEN. IN ANY CASE, IT IS EXPECTED THAT HE
WILL RETURN TO LESOTHO BEFORE THE CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS.

2. THE KING'S DEPARTURE LACKED THE PUBLICITY AND MILITARY PANOPLY
THAT ORDINARILY ACCOMPANY THE COMING AND GOING OF THE HEAD OF
STATE. ONLY THE DIPLOMATIC CROPS, THE CABINET AND A FEW SENIOR
CIVIL SERVANTS WERE PRESENT AT THE AIRPORT. THE PRIME MINISTER
WAS NOTICEABLY ABSENT.

3. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE PM AND THE KING CONTINUE TO BE MARKED
BY PRONOUNCED COOLNESS IF NOT OPEN DISDAIN. AT THE RECENT
PRESENTATION OF THE NEWLY-CONSTRUCTED ROYAL PALACE, THE OFFICIAL
PROGRAM FEATURED THE PRIME MINISTER AND COMPLETELY EXCLUDED THE
KING FROM ANY ACTIVE PART. TO THE SURPRISE OF THE ASSEMBLED
THRONG, HOWEVER, THE KING HAD HIS PRIVATE SECRETARY INTERVENE WITH
THE PROTOCOL OFFICER (WHO WAS ACTING AS MASTER OF CEREMONIES) TO
ANNOUNCE THAT HIS MAJESTY WISHED TO SPEAK, WHICH HE DID. THE

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CEREMONY OBVIOUSLY HAD BEEN CONTRIVED TO CREATE THE IMPRESSION

THAT THE PM, REPRESENTING THE PEOPLE OF LESOTHO, WAS BESTOWING
THIS PALATIAL GIFT ON THE KING. THOUGH NO TRANSLATION OF THE
KING'S SPEECH HAS BECOME AVAILABLE, IT WAS CLEAR ACCORDING TO
LONG TIME OBSERVERS THAT HM WAS TRYING TO CAST THE BUILDING
OF A NEW PALACE IN A LIGHT MORE FAVORABLE TO HIMSELF.
STOKES

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